



**FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2025-2029**

**1. Comprehensive Mission Statement:**

To honor Mississippi Veterans and their dependents through superior service, care, and assistance.

**2. Agency Philosophy:**

The State Veterans Affairs Board, MSVA, is charged with assisting former and current members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their dependents in securing all benefits or privileges to which they are entitled and to advise the Governor and Legislature on Veterans' affairs in Mississippi. The three primary tenants of the agency are the operations of the State Veterans Nursing Homes, State Veterans Memorial Cemeteries, and approving programs and institutions of education and training under the GI Bill.

It is the commitment of MSVA to care for each Veteran and/or their dependents at the highest level of care and service. No other state agency is tasked solely with the comprehensive care of Mississippi's Veteran community. Whether they are recently separated or their service occurred decades ago, the MSVA seeks to meet their needs at the point of life they come into contact with MSVA.

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At Large

### **3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks:**

While the MSVA's mission does not directly parallel the exact goals and benchmarks of any area listed in the Statewide Plan, several areas complement and further the goals of the Statewide Plan. Specifically, MSVA's mission, goals, and activities enhance the State's goals for economic development, education, and general government.

Statewide Goal #1: To develop a robust state economy that provides the opportunity for productive employment for all Mississippians.

#### **Relevant Benchmarks #1:**

- Increase net job growth.
- Increase the number of jobs in each of the Mississippi Development Authority's seven targeted industries through MSVA's Employment Outreach programs: advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agribusiness, automotive, energy, healthcare, and shipbuilding.
- Increase median household income for Veterans and all Mississippians.
- Increase percentage of the civilian and Veteran populations employed.
- Increase percentage of Veteran Mississippians receiving workforce training services.
- Make available our Veteran's knowledge, skills, and abilities to Mississippi businesses due to an overall increased desire to hire Veterans in all job types.

Statewide Goal #2: To make available an accessible, quality public higher education or trade school that prepares Mississippians to become productive, financially self-sufficient members of society.

#### **Relevant Benchmarks #2:**

- Increase student graduation rates from high school to secondary education.
- Increase first-year student retention rates in colleges and universities.
- Increase the number and percentage of degrees awarded to adult learners who enter college for the first time and those returning after a delay.
- Increase percentage of state's population age 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree or higher through first time enrollment or continuing education.

Statewide Goal #3: To protect the public's safety, including providing timely and appropriate responses to emergencies and disasters and to operate a fair and effective system of justice.

#### **Relevant Benchmarks #3:**

- Improve Case clearance rates to ensure Veterans have adequate income to live.
- Decrease percentage of offenders without a GED or high school diploma.
- Increase the percentage of released offenders with marketable job skills.
- Reduce adult recidivism rate by providing employable job skills while incarcerated by working with MDOC.

Statewide Goal #4: To protect Mississippians from risks to public health and to provide them with the health-related information and access to quality healthcare necessary to increase the length and quality of their lives.

Relevant Benchmarks #4:

- Increase the number of Certified Nursing Assistants working in Mississippi by working with MSDH to conduct on-site CNA training at our Nursing Homes.
- Increase the percentage of people receiving mental health crisis services who were treated at community mental health centers and other approved locations.
- Decrease the number of individuals on waiting list for in-home and community-based services.
- Work with other state agencies and our federal partners to provide transportation to our state Veterans to ensure they receive the highest quality health care through the VA systems.

#### **4. Overview of the Office Five-Year Strategic Plan:**

The major goals and objectives of the MSVA over the next five years are to:

- Increase the number of Veterans receiving benefits or services.
- Increase availability of services to Veterans at all levels of care.
- Increase the ability to retain and hire staff.
- Increase the amount of relevant information provided to the public by the MSVA through an open and aggressive Communications Plan.
- Decrease staff turnover by finding ways to be more competitive with other public and private sector employers.
- Increase internal and external training opportunities related to Veteran services and operations.
- Complete the new Veterans Affairs Nursing Home in Tradition.
- Renovate the Collins, Oxford, and Kosciusko facilities to ensure all facilities are up to date and safe for all residents.
- Perform all preventive maintenance requirements and replace old mechanical systems to ensure all facilities meet VA requirements and provide proper life safety requirements.
- Work to ensure the new Burial Equity Act for our cemeteries is properly executed to allow our Reserve Component Service Members burial in our two cemeteries.
- Work diligently with volunteer organizations throughout the state to provide additional resources to our Veterans.
- Secure federal funding and relocate the Jackson Home due to major structural issues at the current location.

Strategies to achieve these goals include educating the general public and the Legislature; working with other state agencies; working with our federal partners and Congressional delegation; eliminating inefficiencies in current operations by hiring an Internal Controls employee; continuing an ongoing evaluation of working conditions, strategies, etc.; and using creative and modern methods to interact with the general public to provide more information, opportunities and access to care and benefits.

## **Current Operations**

MSVA currently administers the only four state-owned, skilled-nursing facilities (Collins, Jackson, Kosciusko and Oxford Veterans' Homes), with a new 100 bed facility being constructed at Tradition. Completion of Tradition is scheduled for September 2023. Each home has a maximum census population of 150 residents, excluding the new facility at Tradition. The state is temporarily authorized 700 bed spaces by the federal VA to support the new construction. The permanent authorized number is 600 bed spaces. As we proceed with updating current facilities and converting double occupancy rooms to single occupancy rooms, the temporary authorization of 700 will reduce back to 600. The Veterans' Homes comprise the largest percentage of MSVA employees.

These numbers will increase when we open the Tradition home in September 2023.

Certified Nursing Assistants	220
Licensed Professional Nurses	136
Registered Nurses	52
Administration	20
Other	216

In addition, MSVA administers two Veteran Cemeteries: North Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Kilmichael, MS, and Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Newton, MS. These cemeteries provide Mississippi with the capacity to inter 274,139 Veterans and their dependents in perpetual care. The newly federally authorized Burial Equity Act allows Reserve Component service members that never served on active duty to receive burial honors in our cemeteries. Final rules are being developed by the NCA, National Cemetery Administration. At the current time, only service members with active duty service can receive burial honors.

MSVA provides over 25 Veteran Service Officers to the Veterans of Mississippi. These VSO's are dispersed across the state of Mississippi ensuring that a state VSO is within 50 miles of the majority of Mississippi Veterans. 8 of the 25 VSOs are located at the federal Veteran Administration Regional Office in Jackson, MS. Their primary function is to handle appeals and casework on behalf of Veterans while interacting with their federal VA counterparts and County Veteran Service Officer's. MSVA also provides the training and accreditation for Mississippi's 82 County Veteran Service Officers, who are employees of their respective counties and are an integral part of serving our states Veteran's.

### **5.1 Agency's External/Internal Assessment:**

Like many agencies, MSVA has a number of External and Internal challenges.

EXTERNAL challenges and issues:

- A. COVID-19 and its impact on healthcare as whole;
- B. Fluctuation in funding and revenue streams, General, Federal and Special Funds;
- C. Changing population and demographics of Mississippi's Veteran community;
- D. MSVA has no/limited control over the operations of external entities
  - Veteran Service Organizations (American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, etc.).
  - County Veteran Service Officers.
  - Local Non-Profit Veteran support groups.
  - Veteran workforce training (US Department of Labor grant is administered by Mississippi Employment Security).
  - Universities and Colleges servicing student Veterans.

E. Some state agencies, local governments, home health companies, and most private nursing homes offer higher salaries to various staff positions such as CNA's and Nurses. Higher pay entices MSVA employees to leave for these higher salaries. Thanks to SEC2 we have become more competitive and should see a decrease in departures.

INTERNAL challenges and issues:

- A. Continued staff losses due to retirement and turnover.
- B. Salary cap that creates downward pressure on all employee salaries but is decreasing due to SEC2.
- C. Statutory limitations that restricts the collection and expenditure of needed special funds.
- D. Generational retirements and loss of historical and institutional knowledge.
- E. Less experienced workforce and more turnover requires greater training demands.
- F. Greater flexibility in other agencies due to having the ability to work remotely.
- G. More employment opportunities with higher salaries in the civilian sector.

The following are positive internal issues that are being explored and increased to alleviate and combat the negative challenges and issues facing the MSVA:

- A. Additional recruiting for all positions.
- B. Vocation training/federal grant incentive opportunities.
- C. Use of interns.
- D. Cross training and shared resources.
- E. Improved technology resources.
- F. Use of more contract employees.

## **5.2 Internal Management Systems Used to Evaluate Agency Performance**

MSVA's executive management continuously tracks cost-benefit and cost-ratio data. Constant review of expenditures by category and by division helps MSVA maintain a high level of performance on a very limited budget. Individual MSVA divisions regularly track and review costs, generation of special fund revenue, and—with the assistance of MSVA's Financial Services Division—divisional expenditures in all categories—salaries and fringe, travel, commodity, contractual, etc.—thereby being able to understand the overall agency's performance with its strengths and weaknesses.

Project-by-project, MSVA tracks cost benefits and continuously looks for efficiencies. MSVA conducts staff performance evaluations regularly based on work products. Additionally, MSVA's Directors, Supervisors, and Managers are encouraged to provide regular, constructive verbal feedback to employees. MSVA tracks training and education status of its employees and considers it a benefit to allow employees to participate in periodic continual education.

## 6. Agency Goals Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program 2025

### Program 1: Claims/Outreach

Goal: The field representatives and VSO's that comprise the Claims/Outreach Division guide Veterans through the processes established by both state and federal officials to grant benefits to Veterans.

Objective: Interact with Veterans in a manner that informs them of available benefits while gathering all relevant data to process the potential claim and handle all appeals arising from federal VA adjudications on benefits.

Outcome: Increased benefits to the Veteran.

Outcome: Increased economic benefit to the State.

Strategy: Guide Veterans through the labyrinthian rules and regulations regarding federal VA benefits.

Output: Number of claims handled, appeals/hearings conducted, and claim files reviewed.

Efficiency: Cost per claim.

Explanatory: The premier way to measure the success of VSO's assisting Veterans is by measuring the number of cases, appeals, and Veteran interactions which occur within a fiscal year.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2025 Estimate
1. VA Claims Processed	15,000
2. Appeals Processed	825
3. VA Case Claim Files Reviewed	9,840
4. VA Computer Files Reviewed	16,000
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Claim Processed	\$42.98
Program Outcomes	
Compensation and Pensions (Increase)	\$275.00

## Program 2: School Authorizing Authority (SAA)

Goal: Ensure schools MSVA is contracted to assess are assessed in a timely manner and meet the qualifications to receive GI Bill funds and reduce fraud.

Objective: Approve IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeship programs to ensure the appropriate qualifications are met.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the school, training program, or apprenticeship.

Outcome: Benefit to the Veteran by way of receiving a quality education at a qualified institution without having to return any improperly spent GI Bill funds.

Strategy: Conduct surveys (either virtual or in-person) to gauge whether the institution is meeting the criteria for the GI Bill.

Output: Approved active IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeships.

Output: Program approval actions.

Efficiency: Federal payments to SAA pursuant to the contract.

Efficiency: Cost per Veteran enrolled.

Explanatory: To measure the impact of SAA, measuring the federal payments demonstrates MSVA's compliance with the provisions of the contract with SAA.

Explanatory: Cost per Veteran gives a reasonable approximation of the value of SAA.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2025 Estimate
1. Approved Active IHL and NCD	99
2. OJT and Apprenticeships	9
3. Program Approval Actions	120
Program Efficiencies	
1. Federal Reimbursement Payments to State	\$202,000.00
2. Cost per Veteran Enrolled	\$33.00
Program Outcomes	
Veterans Enrolled	6,225



### Program 3: Nursing Homes/Administrative

Goal: Ensure Veterans admitted to one of the four state-owned Veteran homes receive superior care.

Objective: Maintain a financially viable healthcare Veteran-based healthcare system

Outcome: Benefit the State by attracting and maintaining residency of aging Veterans.

Outcome: Benefit the Veteran by providing care which meets or exceeds other nursing homes, irrespective of other nursing home populations.

Strategy: Maintain an occupancy rate which allows the Veteran homes to be self-sustaining

Output: Occupancy rate.

Output: Beds available.

Efficiency: Veteran's cost per day.

Efficiency: Reimbursement rate as set by federal VA.

Outcome: Occupancy Rate.

Explanatory: The occupancy rate speaks to both the quality of care and the financial stability of the healthcare system as a whole.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2025 Estimate
1. Occupancy Rate (%)	90
2. Nursing Home Beds Available	550
Program Efficiencies	
1. Veterans Cost Per Day	\$122.00
2. Veterans Per Diem Rates	\$65.00
Program Outcomes	
Occupancy Rate	90

#### Program 4: Cemeteries

Goal: To maintain a cemetery befitting of the Veterans interred there.

Objective: Effectively manage the two state owned cemeteries in compliance with national cemetery standards, while maintaining a fiscally responsible use of state general funds.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the state.

Outcome: Dignity and respect for the Veterans interred at each location.

Strategy: Inform the public of the cemeteries appropriately to ensure Veterans are aware of the state cemeteries and the opportunity for interment at either location.

Output: Total interments.

Efficiency: Cost per interment.

Explanatory: The cost per interment measures the fiscal impact of the cemeteries on the state's general funds.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2025 Estimate
Total Interments	1485
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Interment to Maintain	\$297
Program Outcomes	
Interred Family Member Satisfaction (%)	100

## 6.1 Agency Goals Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program 2026

### Program 1: Claims/Outreach

Goal: The field representatives and VSO's that comprise the Claims/Outreach Division guide Veterans through the processes established by both state and federal officials to grant benefits to Veterans.

Objective: Interact with Veterans in a manner that informs them of available benefits while gathering all relevant data to process the potential claim and handle all appeals arising from federal VA adjudications on benefits.

Outcome: Increased benefits to the Veteran.

Outcome: Increased economic benefit to the State.

Strategy: Guide Veterans through the labyrinthian rules and regulations regarding federal VA benefits.

Output: Number of claims handled, appeals/hearings conducted, and claim files reviewed.

Efficiency: Cost per claim.

Explanatory: The premier way to measure the success of VSO's assisting Veterans is by measuring the number of cases, appeals, and Veteran interactions which occur within a fiscal year.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2026 Estimate
1. VA Claims Processed	15,125
2. Appeals Processed	842
3. VA Case Claim Files Reviewed	9,986
4. VA Computer Files Reviewed	16,101
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Claim Processed	\$44.98
Program Outcomes	
Compensation and Pensions (Increase)	\$286.00

## Program 2: School Authorizing Authority (SAA)

Goal: Ensure schools MSVA is contracted to assess are assessed in a timely manner and meet the qualifications to receive GI Bill funds and reduce fraud.

Objective: Approve IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeship programs to ensure the appropriate qualifications are met.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the school, training program, or apprenticeship.

Outcome: Benefit to the Veteran by way of receiving a quality education at a qualified institution without having to return any improperly spent GI Bill funds.

Strategy: Conduct surveys (either virtual or in-person) to gauge whether the institution is meeting the criteria for the GI Bill.

Output: Approved active IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeships.

Output: Program approval actions.

Efficiency: Federal payments to SAA pursuant to the contract.

Efficiency: Cost per Veteran enrolled.

Explanatory: To measure the impact of SAA, measuring the federal payments demonstrates MSVA's compliance with the provisions of the contract with SAA.

Explanatory: Cost per Veteran gives a reasonable approximation of the value of SAA.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2026 Estimate
1. Approved Active IHL and NCD	101
2. OJT and Apprenticeships	7
3. Program Approval Actions	121
Program Efficiencies	
1. Federal Reimbursement Payments to State	\$202,876.00
2. Cost per Veteran Enrolled	\$37.00
Program Outcomes	
Veterans Enrolled	6,290

### Program 3: Nursing Homes/Administrative

Goal: Ensure Veterans admitted to one of the four state-owned Veteran homes receive superior care.

Objective: Maintain a financially viable healthcare Veteran-based healthcare system

Outcome: Benefit the State by attracting and maintaining residency of aging Veterans.

Outcome: Benefit the Veteran by providing care which meets or exceeds other nursing homes, irrespective of other nursing home populations.

Strategy: Maintain an occupancy rate which allows the Veteran homes to be self-sustaining

Output: Occupancy rate.

Output: Beds available.

Efficiency: Veteran's cost per day.

Efficiency: Reimbursement rate as set by federal VA.

Outcome: Occupancy Rate.

Explanatory: The occupancy rate speaks to both the quality of care and the financial stability of the healthcare system as a whole.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2026 Estimate
1. Occupancy Rate (%)	91
2. Nursing Home Beds Available	555
Program Efficiencies	
1. Veterans Cost Per Day	\$127.00
2. Veterans Per Diem Rates	\$66.00
Program Outcomes	
Occupancy Rate	91

#### Program 4: Cemeteries

Goal: To maintain a cemetery befitting of the Veterans interred there.

Objective: Effectively manage the two state owned cemeteries in compliance with national cemetery standards, while maintaining a fiscally responsible use of state general funds.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the state.

Outcome: Dignity and respect for the Veterans interred at each location.

Strategy: Inform the public of the cemeteries appropriately to ensure Veterans are aware of the state cemeteries and the opportunity for interment at either location.

Output: Total interments.

Efficiency: Cost per interment.

Explanatory: The cost per interment measures the fiscal impact of the cemeteries on the state's general funds.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2026 Estimate
Total Interments	1499
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Interment to Maintain	\$306
Program Outcomes	
Interred Family Member Satisfaction (%)	100

## 6.2 Agency Goals Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program 2027

### Program 1: Claims/Outreach

Goal: The field representatives and VSO's that comprise the Claims/Outreach Division guide Veterans through the processes established by both state and federal officials to grant benefits to Veterans.

Objective: Interact with Veterans in a manner that informs them of available benefits while gathering all relevant data to process the potential claim and handle all appeals arising from federal VA adjudications on benefits.

Outcome: Increased benefits to the Veteran.

Outcome: Increased economic benefit to the State.

Strategy: Guide Veterans through the labyrinthian rules and regulations regarding federal VA benefits.

Output: Number of claims handled, appeals/hearings conducted, and claim files reviewed.

Efficiency: Cost per claim.

Explanatory: The premier way to measure the success of VSO's assisting Veterans is by measuring the number of cases, appeals, and Veteran interactions which occur within a fiscal year.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2027 Estimate
1. VA Claims Processed	15,150
2. Appeals Processed	843
3. VA Case Claim Files Reviewed	9,890
4. VA Computer Files Reviewed	16,050
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Claim Processed	\$43.98
Program Outcomes	
Compensation and Pensions (Increase)	\$278.00

## Program 2: School Authorizing Authority (SAA)

Goal: Ensure schools MSVA is contracted to assess are assessed in a timely manner and meet the qualifications to receive GI Bill funds and reduce fraud.

Objective: Approve IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeship programs to ensure the appropriate qualifications are met.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the school, training program, or apprenticeship.

Outcome: Benefit to the Veteran by way of receiving a quality education at a qualified institution without having to return any improperly spent GI Bill funds.

Strategy: Conduct surveys (either virtual or in-person) to gauge whether the institution is meeting the criteria for the GI Bill.

Output: Approved active IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeships.

Output: Program approval actions.

Efficiency: Federal payments to SAA pursuant to the contract.

Efficiency: Cost per Veteran enrolled.

Explanatory: To measure the impact of SAA, measuring the federal payments demonstrates MSVA's compliance with the provisions of the contract with SAA.

Explanatory: Cost per Veteran gives a reasonable approximation of the value of SAA.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2027 Estimate
1. Approved Active IHL and NCD	101
2. OJT and Apprenticeships	8
3. Program Approval Actions	121
Program Efficiencies	
1. Federal Reimbursement Payments to State	\$202,901.00
2. Cost per Veteran Enrolled	\$37.50
Program Outcomes	
Veterans Enrolled	6,325



### Program 3: Nursing Homes/Administrative

Goal: Ensure Veterans admitted to one of the four state-owned Veteran homes receive superior care.

Objective: Maintain a financially viable healthcare Veteran-based healthcare system

Outcome: Benefit the State by attracting and maintaining residency of aging Veterans.

Outcome: Benefit the Veteran by providing care which meets or exceeds other nursing homes, irrespective of other nursing home populations.

Strategy: Maintain an occupancy rate which allows the Veteran homes to be self-sustaining

Output: Occupancy rate.

Output: Beds available.

Efficiency: Veteran's cost per day.

Efficiency: Reimbursement rate as set by federal VA.

Outcome: Occupancy Rate.

Explanatory: The occupancy rate speaks to both the quality of care and the financial stability of the healthcare system as a whole.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2027 Estimate
1. Occupancy Rate (%)	91
2. Nursing Home Beds Available	558

Program Efficiencies	
1. Veterans Cost Per Day	\$129.00
2. Veterans Per Diem Rates	\$67.00

Program Outcomes	
Occupancy Rate	91

#### Program 4: Cemeteries

Goal: To maintain a cemetery befitting of the Veterans interred there.

Objective: Effectively manage the two state owned cemeteries in compliance with national cemetery standards, while maintaining a fiscally responsible use of state general funds.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the state.

Outcome: Dignity and respect for the Veterans interred at each location.

Strategy: Inform the public of the cemeteries appropriately to ensure Veterans are aware of the state cemeteries and the opportunity for interment at either location.

Output: Total interments.

Efficiency: Cost per interment.

Explanatory: The cost per interment measures the fiscal impact of the cemeteries on the state's general funds.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2027 Estimate
Total Interments	1499
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Interment to Maintain	\$312
Program Outcomes	
Interred Family Member Satisfaction (%)	100

### 6.3 Agency Goals Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program 2028

#### Program 1: Claims/Outreach

Goal: The field representatives and VSO's that comprise the Claims/Outreach Division guide Veterans through the processes established by both state and federal officials to grant benefits to Veterans.

Objective: Interact with Veterans in a manner that informs them of available benefits while gathering all relevant data to process the potential claim and handle all appeals arising from federal VA adjudications on benefits.

Outcome: Increased benefits to the Veteran.

Outcome: Increased economic benefit to the State.

Strategy: Guide Veterans through the labyrinthian rules and regulations regarding federal VA benefits.

Output: Number of claims handled, appeals/hearings conducted, and claim files reviewed.

Efficiency: Cost per claim.

Explanatory: The premier way to measure the success of VSO's assisting Veterans is by measuring the number of cases, appeals, and Veteran interactions which occur within a fiscal year.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2028 Estimate
1. VA Claims Processed	15,155
2. Appeals Processed	845
3. VA Case Claim Files Reviewed	9,899
4. VA Computer Files Reviewed	16,080
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Claim Processed	\$45.56
Program Outcomes	
Compensation and Pensions (Increase)	\$295.00

## Program 2: School Authorizing Authority (SAA)

Goal: Ensure schools MSVA is contracted to assess are assessed in a timely manner and meet the qualifications to receive GI Bill funds and reduce fraud.

Objective: Approve IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeship programs to ensure the appropriate qualifications are met.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the school, training program, or apprenticeship.

Outcome: Benefit to the Veteran by way of receiving a quality education at a qualified institution without having to return any improperly spent GI Bill funds.

Strategy: Conduct surveys (either virtual or in-person) to gauge whether the institution is meeting the criteria for the GI Bill.

Output: Approved active IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeships.

Output: Program approval actions.

Efficiency: Federal payments to SAA pursuant to the contract.

Efficiency: Cost per Veteran enrolled.

Explanatory: To measure the impact of SAA, measuring the federal payments demonstrates MSVA's compliance with the provisions of the contract with SAA.

Explanatory: Cost per Veteran gives a reasonable approximation of the value of SAA.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2028 Estimate
1. Approved Active IHL and NCD	101
2. OJT and Apprenticeships	8
3. Program Approval Actions	121
Program Efficiencies	
1. Federal Reimbursement Payments to State	\$202,950.00
2. Cost per Veteran Enrolled	\$39.00
Program Outcomes	
Veterans Enrolled	6,425

### Program 3: Nursing Homes/Administrative

Goal: Ensure Veterans admitted to one of the four state-owned Veteran homes receive superior care.

Objective: Maintain a financially viable healthcare Veteran-based healthcare system

Outcome: Benefit the State by attracting and maintaining residency of aging Veterans.

Outcome: Benefit the Veteran by providing care which meets or exceeds other nursing homes, irrespective of other nursing home populations.

Strategy: Maintain an occupancy rate which allows the Veteran homes to be self-sustaining

Output: Occupancy rate.

Output: Beds available.

Efficiency: Veteran's cost per day.

Efficiency: Reimbursement rate as set by federal VA.

Outcome: Occupancy Rate.

Explanatory: The occupancy rate speaks to both the quality of care and the financial stability of the healthcare system as a whole.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2028 Estimate
1. Occupancy Rate (%)	91
2. Nursing Home Beds Available	561
Program Efficiencies	
1. Veterans Cost Per Day	\$129.00
2. Veterans Per Diem Rates	\$67.00
Program Outcomes	
Occupancy Rate	91

#### Program 4: Cemeteries

Goal: To maintain a cemetery befitting of the Veterans interred there.

Objective: Effectively manage the two state owned cemeteries in compliance with national cemetery standards, while maintaining a fiscally responsible use of state general funds.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the state.

Outcome: Dignity and respect for the Veterans interred at each location.

Strategy: Inform the public of the cemeteries appropriately to ensure Veterans are aware of the state cemeteries and the opportunity for interment at either location.

Output: Total interments.

Efficiency: Cost per interment.

Explanatory: The cost per interment measures the fiscal impact of the cemeteries on the state's general funds.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2028 Estimate
Total Interments	1501
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Interment to Maintain	\$312
Program Outcomes	
Interred Family Member Satisfaction (%)	100

## 6.4 Agency Goals Objectives, Strategies, and Measures by Program 2029

### Program 1: Claims/Outreach

Goal: The field representatives and VSO's that comprise the Claims/Outreach Division guide Veterans through the processes established by both state and federal officials to grant benefits to Veterans.

Objective: Interact with Veterans in a manner that informs them of available benefits while gathering all relevant data to process the potential claim and handle all appeals arising from federal VA adjudications on benefits.

Outcome: Increased benefits to the Veteran.

Outcome: Increased economic benefit to the State.

Strategy: Guide Veterans through the labyrinthian rules and regulations regarding federal VA benefits.

Output: Number of claims handled, appeals/hearings conducted, and claim files reviewed.

Efficiency: Cost per claim.

Explanatory: The premier way to measure the success of VSO's assisting Veterans is by measuring the number of cases, appeals, and Veteran interactions which occur within a fiscal year.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2029 Estimate
1. VA Claims Processed	15,158
2. Appeals Processed	865
3. VA Case Claim Files Reviewed	9,899
4. VA Computer Files Reviewed	16,100
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Claim Processed	\$45.98
Program Outcomes	
Compensation and Pensions (Increase)	\$301.00

## Program 2: School Authorizing Authority (SAA)

Goal: Ensure schools MSVA is contracted to assess are assessed in a timely manner and meet the qualifications to receive GI Bill funds and reduce fraud.

Objective: Approve IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeship programs to ensure the appropriate qualifications are met.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the school, training program, or apprenticeship.

Outcome: Benefit to the Veteran by way of receiving a quality education at a qualified institution without having to return any improperly spent GI Bill funds.

Strategy: Conduct surveys (either virtual or in-person) to gauge whether the institution is meeting the criteria for the GI Bill.

Output: Approved active IHL, NCD, OJT, and apprenticeships.

Output: Program approval actions.

Efficiency: Federal payments to SAA pursuant to the contract.

Efficiency: Cost per Veteran enrolled.

Explanatory: To measure the impact of SAA, measuring the federal payments demonstrates MSVA's compliance with the provisions of the contract with SAA.

Explanatory: Cost per Veteran gives a reasonable approximation of the value of SAA.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2029 Estimate
1. Approved Active IHL and NCD	102
2. OJT and Apprenticeships	9
3. Program Approval Actions	129
Program Efficiencies	
1. Federal Reimbursement Payments to State	\$202,955.00
2. Cost per Veteran Enrolled	\$42.00
Program Outcomes	
Veterans Enrolled	6,625



### Program 3: Nursing Homes/Administrative

Goal: Ensure Veterans admitted to one of the four state-owned Veteran homes receive superior care.

Objective: Maintain a financially viable healthcare Veteran-based healthcare system

Outcome: Benefit the State by attracting and maintaining residency of aging Veterans.

Outcome: Benefit the Veteran by providing care which meets or exceeds other nursing homes, irrespective of other nursing home populations.

Strategy: Maintain an occupancy rate which allows the Veteran homes to be self-sustaining

Output: Occupancy rate.

Output: Beds available.

Efficiency: Veteran's cost per day.

Efficiency: Reimbursement rate as set by federal VA.

Outcome: Occupancy Rate.

Explanatory: The occupancy rate speaks to both the quality of care and the financial stability of the healthcare system as a whole.

Program Outputs/Outcomes		FY 2029 Estimate
1. Occupancy Rate (%)		91
2. Nursing Home Beds Available		565
Program Efficiencies		
1. Veterans Cost Per Day		\$131.00
2. Veterans Per Diem Rates		\$67.00
Program Outcomes		
Occupancy Rate		91

#### Program 4: Cemeteries

Goal: To maintain a cemetery befitting of the Veterans interred there.

Objective: Effectively manage the two state owned cemeteries in compliance with national cemetery standards, while maintaining a fiscally responsible use of state general funds.

Outcome: Economic benefit to the state.

Outcome: Dignity and respect for the Veterans interred at each location.

Strategy: Inform the public of the cemeteries appropriately to ensure Veterans are aware of the state cemeteries and the opportunity for interment at either location.

Output: Total interments.

Efficiency: Cost per interment.

Explanatory: The cost per interment measures the fiscal impact of the cemeteries on the state's general funds.

Program Outputs/Outcomes	FY 2029 Estimate
Total Interments	1503
Program Efficiencies	
Cost per Interment to Maintain	\$312
Program Outcomes	
Interred Family Member Satisfaction (%)	100

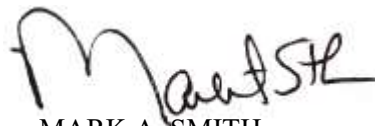
### **Conclusion/Summary:**

The Veterans' Affairs Board is an invaluable asset to the State of Mississippi. The agency demonstrates Mississippi's unmatched commitment to its Veterans, current Service Members, and military families. The Veterans' Affairs Board will continue to demonstrate and protect this commitment by taking care of Veterans and family members seeking our assistance. We will do this by offering superb customer service and continued follow on support to our Veterans, current Service Members, and their families. Beginning with all application processes, we will personally walk them through the process whether online, telephonically, or in person. After successfully supporting our Veterans, we will always make ourselves available to answer their questions and provide additional assistance whenever they need us.

We will make ourselves visible to our Veterans through our marketing, mass media, and other outreach programs. We strive daily to inform all of our Veterans in Mississippi about the benefits being offered to them by the state and federal government. We will continually reach out to them and their families at various events and conferences to make sure they fully understand the benefits the state is providing and how we can support them. We will also assist them by working with other state agencies to provide support and benefits that enable them to become self-sufficient.

Finally, we will achieve these objectives by developing and empowering our awesome staff. Using the updated recommendations of SPB, we will make sure that individuals are classified and compensated accordingly. A solid succession plan will be built into the organization that will provide room for advancement for high performing team members. By placing the right person, not just a person, in the right place, performing the right jobs, we will be able to better support our Veterans and their families. Taking care of our staff is paramount to ensuring Mississippi's Veterans needs are met for many years to come.

Mission First – People Always!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Smith". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "M" and a cursive "Smith".

MARK A. SMITH  
Executive Director